

The COMMONWEAL

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Marshall on China

GENERAL MARSHALL'S statement on China is brief and complex and does not lend itself to digest or summary. The straightforward and sympathetic style and the clarity and simplicity of detail emphasize, when the paper is read altogether, the open questions and unresolved policies which the General lays before the American people. This is no blunt and impatient soldier cutting through international complications with the unworldly sword of a "non-political" profession.

The nearest to a summary paragraph is this: "The salvation of the situation, as I see it, would be the assumption of leadership by the liberals in the Government and in the minority parties, a splendid group of men, but who as yet lack the political power to exercise a controlling influence. Successful action on their part under the leadership of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek would, I believe, lead to unity through good government."

Two preliminary questions of particular interest arise from this paragraph: Who and where are the desired "liberals"? Where and how should they come forward? What we are trying to get at is Marshall's views on some of these problems: Should it be assumed that the Chinese communist leaders must enter into the Chinese Government? Must the Chinese Government

undergo a literally revolutionary transformation in order to warrant US support? Should good liberals join as individuals who shall work in (broadening and changing for the better) the going Government, or should they come in as parties, with the Government changing its whole character by corporate compromises so that it will not be the present national Government but a new blend? Into what organism or what kind of organism, existing or projected, should Chinese statesmanship gather and concentrate?

It is hard to know if what follows interprets General Marshall accurately, but it seems to present roughly what he says. The present, recognized Chinese Government under Chiang Kai-shek should be maintained with a continuing identity, and upon that structure the building must be built. The "irreconcilable groups within the Kuomintang, interested in the preservation of their own feudal control of China," who, Marshall writes, are dominant now, must be supplanted in power by more open men of the Kuomintang and of "minority" parties, working under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. That's on the Right.

On the Left, General Marshall reports, "I have never been in a position to be certain of the development of attitudes in the innermost Chinese communist circles." It is they, and not he, significantly, who prevented the acquaintanceship. Ruling the "dyed-in-the-wool" Communists out of liberal possibilities, General Marshall observes, "On the side of the Chinese Communist party are, I believe, liberals as well as radicals, though this view is vigorously opposed by many who believe that the Chinese Communist party discipline is too rigidly enforced to admit of such differences of viewpoint." He would like to leave the door open to the supposed "liberal group among the communists, especially of young men who have turned to the communists in disgust at the corruption evident in the local governments—men who would put the interest of the Chinese people above ruthless measures to establish a communist ideology in the immediate future."

This hoped-for group of the Left, it appears, would be welcomed within the national Government—to broaden and strengthen that Government and not to transform it into something that would comprise also the Chinese communist régime. To the latter he ascribes the policy of "evidently counting on an economic collapse to bring about the fall of the Government, accelerated by extensive guerrilla action against the long lines of rail communications—regardless of the cost in suffering to the Chinese people."

It appears to us that up to now United States policy has been different from what the new Secretary of State is suggesting. We have appeared to try to push together all Chinese fac-

tions, from the "irreconcilable reactionaries" through the "dyed-in-the-wool communists" into some unimagined coalition which would replace in revolutionary fashion the recognized Government under Chiang Kai-shek. Such a wide compromise was impossible in the first place, and could, even with the assistance of a miracle, produce only an ephemeral régime which would then collapse in line with the policy which Marshall says is that of the adamant communists. The US has, it seems, attempted to engineer corporate reunions of whole parties under their current leaders, and especially of the whole Communist party, into the national Government, which would have meant its loss of identity and collapse. Such a policy did not appear to follow treaties entered into, nor solid sense. In the chaotic and enormous changes and fluctuations of Chinese public life it appears essential to develop one securely rooted governmental organism and to work for the growth of that organ, with energies and good will no longer frustrated by the close danger of complete uprooting. The good men traveling with the Chinese communists have to be won over from their ruthless totalitarian ideology and their current leaders, and from the Chinese communist anti-state, to broaden and better the state. That cannot be done by ruining the state through some forced compromise with the anti-state. "Now that the form for a democratic China has been laid down . . . practical measures will be the best." While trying to advance them and help keep the door open within China and to the world, the US must consider that a door needs a house with a foundation.

TVA: Profit or Loss?

THERE is something unhappily familiar about the issuance of the annual TVA report and reaction to it from the private utility interests. This year the public has not been let in on many of the details of the annual debate, but there do seem to be enough commonly accepted figures and other undisputed factors to lead to some conclusion.

To begin with, the argument appears to be carried along on a false plane. From the evidence available, TVA spokesmen are a bit too breezy in their claims of profits, exact to the last penny, on their sales of electric power at about half the normal rate. They seek to press their figures too far. On the other hand statistics are unmistakable that the margin of profit in the distribution of electricity by private utilities is extremely wide. In other words TVA is correct in its contention that consumers should get their electricity more cheaply than they do but ill-advised in stressing their operating figures as iron-clad, in trying to prove too much.

For their part, the Edison Institute (utilities'

trade association) is more convincing in its listing of past and present aids to the TVA from the American taxpayer than it is in the whopping losses it tries to fix on the Authority's annual electric power operations. The Institute is, of course, dead wrong in its charge that the Authority does not pay its share of the cost of government. What TVA pays the states in lieu of taxes exceeds former state receipts from private utilities in each area, while the prosperity it brings to an area such as the Tennessee Valley is reflected in a noticeably larger tax intake from that steadily more productive region.

But would it not be better to pose the argument in another fashion? How much is it worth to achieve such results as the following: nearly 700,000 people in nine states using 50 percent more electricity than the national average year after year and getting it for hardly more than half the normal rate; thousands of families in a great river valley made secure from the ravages of flood which had from time to time in the bitter past washed away their homes, their lands, their life's savings; in an area once terribly diseaseridden the pest of malaria virtually wiped out; a navigation program which has increased cheap transportation on the Tennessee by one-third even in the past three years; the production of enough phosphates and other soil-building fertilizers to supply fruitful experimentation on 38,890 farms in all parts of this country.

This list could be materially lengthened but it forms the basis for an unassailable argument in support of TVA. Regardless of its abstract truth, cheap power at a specific profit is not the figure with which to convince the American public. Far better would it be each year to emphasize the expansion of production and consumption which this sort of river valley development makes possible. A record of accomplishments of the scope of TVA's is always proof against the repeated private utility charge of "hidden costs."

Co-ops in the Big Time

AMERICANS carried away by the magic of figures must at last be impressed by the fact that during 1946 "consumer cooperative business, both farm and city, . . . is conservatively estimated at over a billion dollars" in the United States and Canada. For the minority who are obstinately impervious to the sheer weight of numbers there are developments in the movement of even greater significance. Outstanding is the formation of three new national organizations: the National Cooperative Mutual Housing Association, the Cooperative Health Federation of America and the North American League of Student Cooperatives. In the world arena the establishment of the International Cooperative Petroleum Association, with U.S. Co-op oil shipments to co-ops

in Australia, China, France, the Netherlands, South Africa and Sweden was a most striking accomplishment.

For the average citizen other aspects of present cooperative activity more strongly capture the imagination. Over a hundred groups of veterans organized themselves cooperatively to obtain homes; forty cooperative hospitals are in the process of organization; nearly a hundred of the thousand co-op food stores are operating as supermarkets; a growing link between the cooperative and labor movements is indicated by the formation of seventy-one committees on cooperatives by the United Auto Workers. And in the matter of production as well as distribution for the benefit of a membership open to all, groups affiliated with National Cooperatives, Inc., owned and operated 179 productive facilities, including oil refineries, mills, factories (fertilizer, food products, farm machinery, etc.), mines and processing plants, not to mention more than 500 oil wells and 1600 miles of pipe line. The evidence is unmistakable that increasing numbers of Americans are learning, according to well-tried Rochdale methods, how to pool their modest capital, technical abilities and business acumen in order to secure the widest range of reliable goods and services. And in certain areas, at least, cooperative enterprise is able to make its presence felt to the extent of keeping retail prices down for the whole community generally. By American business standards co-op growth is slow if extremely steady. Is there any limit to the scope of this solidly democratic form of human enterprise providing it is not penalized legislatively?

Perón's Current Course

IN PRESENTING in this issue first-hand impressions of the political atmosphere of Uruguay THE COMMONWEAL has in mind the strategic position of that small republic confronting a larger and more powerful neighbor with big ideas. In this connection it is worthy of note that Perón has recently presented his own Five-Year Plan to the Argentine Congress. It is all there properly allocated and totting up to an expenditure of an unprecedented \$1,600,000,000. The biggest items significantly enough are respectively: transport, public health, water power, oilfields, sanitation, navigation and ports and roads. The most sensational project is a 1,200-mile pipeline to Buenos Aires from southern oilfields, which is also to supply natural gas to some forty Argentine cities. The accent is on power with the solid underpinning of a vast socialization. It all underlines the importance of making the right decision about supplying South American arms and of an intelligent solution of the Braden-Messersmith impasse. And Uruguay's present plight points to the need for a new firm and consistent Argentine policy

on the part of the US State Department. The Good Neighbor Policy embodies a sound and sincere idea; its practical implications must harmonize with changes in the political scene.

St. Nicholas Landmark

THERE are special and local interests in the departure of Rev. Dr. Joseph R. Sizoo from the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas in New York which apply to New Yorkers and to members of the Reformed Dutch Church and which are not for comment here—about the internal organization and discipline of Churches, charters governing control of Church property, the looks and character of Fifth Avenue, etc. But there is justifiable general and outside interest in some aspects of the St. Nicholas controversy. A Church building—much older than nearly all the nearby buildings, there, under Radio City, a landmark of past architectural taste, a memorial of days when a part of New York was residential which is now commercial, a building for religion and prayer on a site which the papers estimate to be worth \$4,000,000 as a commercial proposition—it seems to be on its way out. The same sort of thing happens all the time in all American cities. Can you justify \$4,000,000 for that not large church lot, or the retention of an edifice archaic in its surroundings and certainly no Chartres for beauty? The money could build a lot of churches in newer residential sections; income from the present property could furnish great alms to the needy poor. But how do you build a spiritual city? How can you keep a decent proportion of money-making and prayer in the landscape? How are monuments and the city's avenues to be beautiful by secure style, organic growth and the aspirations of the people? What idea do we want our streets and buildings and towns to express? As a general proposition the answers seem to us too thoughtlessly and radically against the Collegiate Churches of St. Nicholas.

A Room of Their Own

THERE are some people who have to have a room of their own before they can think or write, and then only a subdued concert of the city enters the room—but the sounds must not be meaningless. The ships in the North River announce their departure with a deep voiced warning to the tugs, the train of barges, the ferry boats, and you must know all the ports to which they sail, and how it is when the green Irish country is what you see first, or the bare African hills, and how it is when the ship moves quietly into the calm waters of any harbor and the people of any foreign country look up at the ship from the quay; the policemen, the customs guards in

any uniforms, the voices speaking in any tongue, the mother in any port anywhere in the world moving suddenly to take her child by the hand who has stepped too far forward. The room in which the writer works must admit the city's sound; the silence in which he works exists so that he may listen attentively to the world; the danger comes when he does not hear the sounds of the city and of the world and when, in his room, he listens only to himself.

The danger came when Hitler, when Mussolini, had a room of their own and listened only to themselves. They had arranged the city so that every sound that came from the city into their room was a sound that sustained, reinforced, amplified the sound they heard in their minds. They opened the window, they stepped out on the balcony, to listen to a tumult they had ordered; they listened to the crowds in the square in Berlin, in the square in Rome, and they thought they heard all Berlin, all Rome consenting, all Germany, all Italy applauding; they thought their dialogue was with the world. They did not listen to, they did not hear, the imprisoned; they did not hear what the lovers said walking in the parks of the capitals, or the song with which someone was putting a child to sleep, or the branches of the trees in the park with the wind moving them.

It can be a writer, but also it can be the men who form the governments of all the nations who must listen to the sounds of the city, the anxious city that is never at rest (the city of man is never at rest), who must hear the trains rumbling beneath the city, the elevated trains, the ambulance hurrying to the hospital, the fire engine, who must hear the ships leaving the harbor and who must know—with a physical, immediate knowledge—that they never can be free of the people of the world, never separated from the individual, everywhere, who is born, and who loves and dies, never alone in a room of their own.

There are these many delegates from all the nations who now are going to be put to work in a skyscraper in New York. We know who they are, we have seen their pictures in the papers, we read what they say, we read all that is said about them. From that point of view it is not so important to us that they should be in New York; we would have the pictures, the papers, the radio wherever they were. If they were out in the country somewhere, in any country, they would be all alone and they would be easy to photograph. We could always go to see them easily and that is not important; we could always find a way to hear what they said and that is not so important.

What is important is that they should see what we look like, hear what we say. When they move round New York they will see Americans and they will hear Americans talking. But it is not this that is so important—not the fact that we

are Americans. It is just that we are so many people in New York, Americans or not Americans; it is just that there is so much for the people of New York to do that they are busy enough so that when the UN delegates look at them and listen to them they will see people who are busy among themselves and talking among themselves. The people of New York will not be lined up along the East River Drive staring at the delegates; the delegates will look at the people of New York just as they will look at the New York traffic, because there are so many people and so much traffic, they will have to look unless they want to get tangled up with their feet. The delegates will look from the towers of their building at Manhattan Island with the rivers on both sides and beyond them at Queens, Brooklyn, the Bronx and Jersey; they will see the planes arriving from across the continent and the ships entering the harbor. Then they will descend from their towers and go out into the streets. Even if they stay in their towers the streets will surround them—in whatever palace they build, in whatever room of their own they work—the sound of the streets will come to them. They will hear the people speaking in the streets. It will not be possible for them to hear only the terms of the treaties; they will not be able to live alone with their private jokes, their protocol, their dreams.

It will be as if the peasants of Calabria had sent a large delegation, or the Chinese. It will be more as if all the peoples of the world had found that it is useless to send delegations. It will be as if the world had decided that sending samples is no use: one red Indian, one Arab, one Turk—when they wore the fez—one Jew, one African pygmy, to wait on one Congress or another, with the policemen allowing one in after another and the interpreter saying this little man wants freedom. It will be as if everyone everywhere who wanted to live perhaps for a few years without a war had asked the seven million men and women of New York to be somewhere in the picture while the question of war or peace is being discussed.

If the UN delegates were in the desert there would be the sun, the moon and the stars but, in practise, that has never been enough to be sure of wisdom, certain of charity. There would be no sound but that which the desert sand would make when the wind drove it against the tent which formed their room or against whatever they had built there to live in. But that silence, unrelieved, might make them think they were legislating peace for a silent deserted world, it might make them as careless of mankind as are the stars and the desert. It is better that they be in New York, hearing New York which makes a sound like a, living world.

C. G. PAULDING.

Reporting Providence

The trace of man and fate
lost in the flux of news

Walter J. Ong

D-DAY had come, and the news commentators were hard at it. Not much to go on, either. Put in the few words in which it was so infrequently couched, the information added up to this: the invasion was on. That statement measured everybody's knowledge from end to end.

For the rest, the news commentators were simply shuffling through the other facts and scraps of speculation already cluttering the corners of people's minds. Changing the position of the checkers on the board and letting it go at that. It was a fairly satisfactory maneuver, in lieu of something better to do.

For the fact is that people derive a tremendous amount of psychological satisfaction from simply experiencing the flow at the surface of events with which they are more or less familiar. The news mentality isn't — as guileless nineteenth-century journalists once dreamed — charmed only at the sheer spectacle of man biting dog. The commentators who turn up after the biting is over are equally enchanting.

The audience doesn't want news straight. In great part, it wants to be given the feeling that the news is getting somewhere. This desire helps explain the annoying fact that at the end of a "commentary," or, for that matter, of many of the garlands of remarks on the current scene done up as books today, one is often hard put to know what precisely has been added to one's mental or emotional store. As you look back over the years, it seems that each column of commentary, each of the sage books, was always saying the same thing as the others, and you'd bet you could prove it, too, if you could only recall *what* it was that they had all been saying.

It's not that only the distance makes it seem so indefinite. What we have liked has been not so much the separate items as the sense of being carried along, the sense of motion. It is largely just this sense of movement that makes us purr so contentedly as the news is poured over our minds.

What this devotion to the flux of "news" events is doing, no one quite knows. It exhibits some features puzzling enough, at least at first blush. You can see some of the things which are fed by this preoccupation with the flux of news. One

is the peculiar psychological state of the Western world: the delusion of exteriority which has sunk so deeply into our consciousnesses that we cannot see our way to admit it is there.

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So passionately that it most often refuses to examine what it has embraced, the Western world has clung to the notion that here at the surface of things, at the level which news, or even history, reports, there is something really to understand. The external world will somehow yield an intelligible pattern independently of its realization within the wholly private interiors of individual human beings.

Even to raise the question as to whether it will, may perhaps be regarded as a disastrous and repulsive thing to do. Questioning in this area is taboo.

The order which our civilization typically seeks to discern is one located at the level of reality exterior to individuals. This is the modern West, which has placed the study of history, of primarily external events, at a premium never allowed by any other civilization. Every other culture has found it impossible even to conceive of history as we do, as a kind of formal discipline like mathematics or physics or theology.

In the ancient Western world, for example, the study of history was valued indeed, but not so much because it had a particular goal of its own as because of the fact that preoccupation with human affairs, especially on a large scale, provided a sort of practice or exercise useful in developing the leader in human society (called by the Romans the "orator"). Again, for Saint Augustine history was of value, but not as precisely getting anywhere in itself. It was integrated into theology.

Yet we of the modern West have attempted to establish history as an autonomous study: out of the halting and admittedly truncated "laws" and prudential judgments of various sorts which are the most that the honest historian can discern by way of general conclusions in what he observes, we have seen men attempt to elaborate pretentious "sciences" of history. We have even been treated to the Hegelian apotheosis in which a "philosophy" of history, a schematization of

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external events, is acclaimed as the science of sciences, the skeleton key to the cosmos.

And not only the order, but the disorder as well with which the modern Western world preoccupies itself is drawn off this level of reality exterior to the individual man. The modern Western anarchist freezes his paranoic gaze not on the interior citadel of his soul but on the framework of world events. Here is the thing he finds rotten to the core.

Other trouble shooters face the same direction. The atheist fixates on the same external aspects of reality and from his inability completely to integrate them with one another persuades himself that there is no God.

And the agnostic sees disorder everywhere except in his own soul. Indeed, his agnosticism recommends itself to him precisely as a dramatic display of the interior tidiness of his mind in protest against the disturbed swirl of events around him. His refusal to commit himself is a refusal to allow his mind to engage with the disorder which he finds as he keeps his eyes trained on the surface of events outside.

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There is something, of course, to say for interest in exterior order. There is a lot to say for the honest gathering and reporting of news, and still more for the serious and exhaustive study of history. Knowing the disastrous effects of the dropping of the iron curtain, we who have more or less free access to news and history should be grateful for the information we thereby enjoy and for the hard work of those who supply it. More especially should Catholics be grateful, since their whole way of life recommends itself in terms of facts solidly embedded in history—the Incarnation, the life of Christ, the history of the Church—and therefore becomes the more impregnable the more history is objectively pursued.

But for what we *make* of news and history, for what we like to feel we *have* when we have them, there is much less to say. We habitually conceive of what they report as complete reality, deficient only in detail, whereas the story that news and history tells is rather a uni-dimensional plotting measuring only the surfaces, the facets, of an irreducibly multi-dimensional reality—a plotting with no means of registering the real and live interior of this reality deep within the soul of every one of billions of human beings.

There have been and are civilizations in which men are not so obsessed with exteriority as they are in ours. These are always civilizations on which the modern West has not imposed its peculiar psychological complexes and inhibitions. To the farmer of China, for example, the famine is not so primarily an historical fact, an agglom-

erate of external events, but rather more an aspect of his life: something that does not so much affect history or the "world" as pose a problem for him, and one interior as well as exterior.

The historical aspect of the matter he is likely to transmit as he resolves it into a proverb or aphorism—thereby assimilating it to a world which has come to be unconsciously distasteful to the Western mind. For there is no doubt that, compared with other civilizations, the modern West exhibits a curious apathy towards and a positive dislike of proverbial wisdom. It is symptomatic, for example, that collections of aphorisms, such as all other civilizations make so much of, are gone from our lives. We are unable to imagine what would prompt people to get together books, whole books, of sententious sayings.

Yet all peoples but ourselves have prized such collections. And our inhibitions in the matter are not far to seek. Gnomie wisdom prejudices the values we want to set on history, and especially on current history. The kind of sophistication which the aphorism implies suggests that whatever lesson the flow of current events may manifest, whatever it has to teach, is already well in hand. It invests the too avid pursuit of "news" with certain implications of immaturity.

The complex of psychological forces behind our reactions here is extremely powerful. The fatalism of the Chinese farmer, or the Mexican Indian, which finds expression in phrases such as "there is nothing you can do about it," with its deep-seated indifference to the historical aspects of the situation and its concentration on the situation and its realization within him, is so foreign to the modern Western mentality that even Western missionaries, so it seems, are inclined to regard it rather as a hopeless psychological museum piece, quite unintelligible to the modern (even Catholic?) Western mind.

No doubt this attitude into which the non-Western peoples so readily fall does less than justice to history and externals. Still, however deficient it may be in itself, it certainly fills in a blind spot in our own view. Have we forgot that in the *Summa* Saint Thomas Aquinas has a discussion of fate? He treats expressly of it . . . the pattern of events deriving from God's intelligence as this pattern exists inside the created world. Here inside things is the created counterpart, the reflection of God's plan, God's providence. You have to see the surface and the inside simultaneously to get the meaning of the universe. Most particularly, you have to see the pattern which is farthest inside things, the pattern which the course of events traces in the deep interior of the souls of this man and that woman.

All men like news and always have, for all men like to gossip. But if the current rash of news-mongering has a general foundation in the pro-

pensities common to all men and in the recently developed techniques, mechanical and rhetorical, for catering to these propensities, it has also a particular meaning on the current scene. It is not a coincidence that never have so many people spent so much time in pursuing news as in the modern Western world. The practice has grown up hand in hand with an assumption which our civilization has seen fit to perpetuate in every possible way. The current ascendancy of the news mentality, the mind which finds its chief satisfaction in skimming over the flotsam at the surface of events, is a tribute to—and no doubt both a cause and a consequence of—our general psychological state. It is intimately linked with the unbelievably persistent and obtuse exteriority of the modern West.

Unquestionably, an interpretation of world events which would explicitly proclaim that the external pattern which we can discern always yields in importance to private internal patterns written in men's souls would be one of the strongest medicines our civilization could be given. Such an interpretation is probably too strong for the modern West to bring itself to take. If you quit being persuaded that events are understandable independently of their effect on the interior of individual human souls, you would upset too many apple carts.

You would have to say, and mean it, that, despite the assumptions of our current surveys, the effects of modern war and of the atomic bomb just aren't very well known and never will be in this life—that what mattered most in World War II was not the bombing of Hiroshima or of anything else, not the impact of the atomic bomb, but the impact of incident on the interior of this and that man and woman. This is pretty strong drink. If our civilization could take it straight—as it patently can't and won't at present—it is questionable how much of the civilization would keep its present shape.

Whatever would be altered and whatever remain, one thing certainly would go. This would be the blind spot, the greatest in the modern Western mind, which, as much as anything else, dictates the quite true, if somewhat deviously realized, antagonism of the modern West to Christianity.

God has indeed made all things. But the kingdom, the order, He has established in so doing is not discoverable from the observation of merely external events. In these events taken alone there simply is no over-all pattern: you need only look at the careening course of the events to see. Organization exists in terms of other dimensions.

But the straight-news mentality keeps telling itself, at least in effect, "No, it's here. Right here." Once you've committed yourself to this position, you have to play your eyes false.

You are likely to find a pattern, whether one is there or not. You are likely to do what others have done who have stuck with this exteriority. First, you are likely to take a determinist view of history: you are likely to *suppose* one or other significant pattern in external events. Then you are going to *impose* the pattern: when events don't come through, you are going to do what the Soviet Union does. Write the news to order. *Put* the pattern there.

You end up with an opposition to Christianity so psychologically complex that your case will be hopeless . . . almost (to anyone short of God Himself).

Concerning the kingdom of God, Christ once told the Pharisees that you can't say, "Look, here it is," or "Look, there it is." Despite its quite real external aspects it can't be handled as, say, Colonel McCormick handles the UN.

If you hear that Christ said something like this, you won't have the slightest idea what He could possibly have meant.

God Is a Strange Lover

God is the strangest of all lovers; His ways
are past explaining.

He sets His heart on a soul; He says to
Himself, "Here I will rest My love."

But He does not woo her with flowers or
jewels or words that are wed to music,
No names endearing, no kindled praise His
heart's direction prove.

His jealousy is an infinite thing; He stalks
the soul with sorrow.

He tramples the bloom, He blots the sun that
could make her vision dim,

He robs and breaks and destroys—there is
nothing at last but her own shame, her own affliction,
And then He comes and there is nothing in the
vast world but He and her love of Him.

Not till the great rebellions die and her will
is safe in His hands forever

Does He open the door of light and His
tendernesses fall,

And then for what is seen in the soul's
virgin places,

For what is heard in the heart there is no speech
at all.

God is a strange lover; the story of His love
is most surprising.

There is no proud queen in her cloth of gold;
over and over again

There is only, deep in the soul, a poor
disheveled woman weeping . . .

For us who have need of a picture and words
there is the pitiful tale of the Magdalen.

JESSICA POWERS.

Politics in Uruguay

Where democratic sentiments are
strong but obstacles are sizable

Ernesto Luciani

THE NEW PRESIDENT of Uruguay, Señor Tomás Berreta, who was elected at the end of last November, has perhaps a more difficult assignment than any of his predecessors—having to form a cabinet with the parliamentary backing adequate for carrying out his program. The man who is to direct the destiny of his country for the next four years has remarkable qualifications.

Since 1942 it has been known that Tomás Berreta was an intimate of the greatest leader the Uruguayan Republic ever had, Don José Batlle y Ordóñez; there is no doubt about their strong personal ties. His political life until five years ago had been limited to leading the electorate of the State of Canelones, a few miles from Montevideo, and his ambition had never gone beyond that of the governorship of that state. Leader of the agrarian workers belonging to the "Colorado" political group, he had never dreamed that his influence would reach outside the boundaries of his district.

Son of a small landholder, Berreta in his youth was a small farmer too. He did not go to school, and in his youth learned only to read and write. But like other South American leaders with the same lack of formal education, he made up for that through a keen political instinct which enabled him to rise from one post to another in his own party. Not until recently was his reputation substantial enough to make him a figure of national prominence.

After the elections of 1941 President Amézaga, who in contrast to Berreta is so much of a scholar that his opponents charged him with neglect of his governmental functions because of his passion for the Greek classics (it was said that instead of occupying himself with Uruguayan problems he was devoting himself to Plato), surprised everyone by making Berreta Minister of Public Works. Probably Berreta himself was greatly surprised, since the best he could have hoped for was the portfolio of Agriculture. But to find himself suddenly in the most sought-after political post in Uruguay was indeed too much to expect. No doubt a North American reader is somewhat puzzled at the assertion that the ministry of public works, an activity apparently so technical, has so much importance. Uruguay, however, is

a country in which many bridges and roads of all kinds are being built. Obviously many workers are necessary on all these construction projects and they are chosen directly by the Minister of Public Works. Berreta's influence therefore would be enormous and he would have the opportunity of employing his political friends first.

The newspapers reacted to the announcement of Berreta's appointment with an astonishment bordering on stupefaction. The leading paper, *El Diario*, gave a brief political biography of each of the new ministers and their qualifications for their portfolios; when it came to Berreta it said in so many words: "As to the naming of Señor Berreta, the only comment possible is to recall the title of Pirandello's comedy, '*Non è una cosa seria*.'"

Berreta, however, proceeded immediately to give the lie to this jibe and hardly had he taken office when he began a four-year plan of public works which has within a few years made great advances for Uruguay. Despite his 69 years he made a point of being present at the opening ceremonies for all bridges, roads, dams and even prisons everywhere in the country, utilizing, to get there, every means of transportation, airplanes, boats, railroads, etc. Wherever he went he received ovations. Within a year the Minister of Public Works was regarded by political observers as an important candidate in the electoral campaign scheduled for 1946. At first everybody laughed at such a possibility, but Berreta had very skilfully played his cards. When the nominating convention itself arrived, his adherents chose him despite the opposition of a large sector of the Colorado Party.

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The government of Amézaga had been confronted by an exceptionally critical period in Uruguayan history. Naturally the war had terrific effects on the nation's economy; if there was no extreme hunger or misery, inflation and low wages did cause widespread suffering. Nothing is more useful for political opposition in any country than economic difficulties and Uruguay is no exception. The National Party (the Blanco group) under the leadership of Luis Alberto de Herrera, opened up a determined attack on

Amézaga and his methods of government, blaming him for everything that happened. Herrera had always been very popular in the rural districts, since he is a political chieftain (*caudillo*) of the traditional type, but the skilful propaganda of his party greatly increased his popular support.

Uruguay depends in large part on Argentina economically. When the military coup of 1943 took place, Amézaga decided to proceed regardless of that dependence and directed that the policy of his State Department should be hostile to the new Argentine régime. His foreign minister, Rodríguez Larreta, was instructed to present to the American foreign offices throughout the Americas a series of notes which finally asked for Pan-American intervention in Argentine affairs. The result was that Perón ordered that all provisions going to Uruguay should be cut off. Therefore that smaller neighbor had to do without potatoes, wheat, and other products.

Herrera took full advantage of these serious shortages to attack Amézaga, promising that if he were in power he would normalize relations with Argentina. Then Perón's newspapers began to attack Rodríguez Larreta and defend Herrera, who sent various emissaries to Perón. The Argentine leader even reached an agreement to the effect that if he supported Herrera for the presidency, the latter would have a *very* friendly attitude toward Argentina. No one was ignorant of the gilded dream of the Argentine militarists to form a South America bloc that would eventually make its influence felt in international gatherings and bring to an end the hegemony in the Americas of the United States. The leader of the bloc would be Argentina, while Russia would not regard it in an unfriendly manner. The Uruguayan opposition, then, not only was fighting the government but in large measure was striving to break up the Pan-American system.

Then came the elections. The victory of Berreta was achieved because the Uruguayan electoral system is set up in such a way that voting is for a party list and not only for individual candidates. Even though a candidate has more votes than the others, his party, or group of candidates for the same office, has to win out in order for him to be elected. The two opponents were the Colorados and the Blancos [the Reds and the Whites, a historical designation such as Democrats and Republicans having no racial or sharp Left-Right connotation]. Within the Colorado group there were three candidates, Berreta, Schiaffino and Baldomir, whose combined votes counted as the party's total. For the Whites only Herrera offered himself as a candidate. In the elections of 1942 the Reds had defeated the Whites by about 200,000 votes, so that unless the latter had made great progress in the meantime, they could not possibly win.

Even so the electoral results were a surprise. Berreta won, to be sure, but Herrera received more votes. Berreta got 163,839; Baldomir, 34,855; Schiaffino, 69,853; Herrera, 176,733. As the three candidates of the Colorado pool their votes, the result was 268,547 to 176,733 in their favor. These figures give Berreta 32 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, Schiaffino 12, Baldomir 3, and Herrera 31. In the Senate the Colorados have 15 seats, the followers of Herrera 10. Besides these, 9 independent nationalists, 5 "*cívicos*", 5 communists and 2 socialists were elected to the House of Deputies.

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Schiaffino and Baldomir contributed to Berreta's victory but they have no love for him. And because of the fact that he controls only two-thirds of the Colorado deputies, the President will have to try to form a coalition cabinet if he hopes to obtain parliamentary support. For the benefit of those who wonder what *cívico* means, I should explain that the party's full title is the Uruguayan Civic Union, a Christian-Democratic grouping which did magnificently in the elections—doubling its vote. Of the 31,966 votes it won, the great majority are Catholic votes, and the party is known as a Catholic party even though officially that is not the case. Its leader, Joaquín Secco Illa, was the first Uruguayan Minister to the Vatican, and its deputies and leaders have always been practicing Catholics. Perhaps 80 percent of the priests in Uruguay belong to this party and there is no doubt that its youthful character affords it great potentialities. It is the Uruguayan equivalent of the Italian *Partito Popolare* or the German Center Party. Although its leaders have sometimes been misunderstood, it is important to recognize that the party's position is clearly democratic; marvelous to relate, the identification between Catholicism and reaction which obtains in nearly all South America does not exist in Uruguay.

There is an incident which should be better known that had a lot to do with winning the party popular support. In 1931 President Gabriel Terra seized power by a coup d'état of clearly reactionary character. Soon afterward he sought out the Archbishop of Montevideo and the leaders of Unión Cívica and asked for their collaboration, offering them whatever they wanted. The Archbishop declared that he could not become involved in politics and the Unión asked for time for consideration. It was a great temptation. Here at last, on a silver platter, was what they had been struggling for for so long. If they accepted, they might eventually become strong enough to be in the saddle. Nevertheless they cast expediency aside and refused to collaborate with Terra, because he was a dictator. Years

later Terra fell victim to as great a contempt as a political figure has ever suffered. The Unión knew it had been right. The *cívicos* had principles.

Their five deputies may in time hold the balance of power in Uruguay. Fifty votes constitute a majority; Berreta has 32 which, joined with the 9 independent nationalists make 41. The opposition has 46, but there are 12 deputies—communists, socialists and *cívicos*—who will hold the balance. Berreta must decide about trying to attract the communists and socialists in order to increase his following to 48; but he is intelligent enough to see that the communists are worthy of little confidence, since they guide their policy on the basis of instructions from Moscow. At the same time, the Colorado group, which chose Berreta, is well known for its militant anti-clericalism, so that many observers do not believe that he will ask the Catholics to collaborate with him.

Despite this fact it would not surprise me if for the first time in Uruguayan history a *cívico* became a member of the Cabinet. There are persistent rumors that Senator Dardo Regules, a *cívico*, will be appointed to the portfolio of foreign affairs. But that does not seem probable to me, because Berreta has to follow a conciliatory policy toward Argentina and Regules is too rabid in his sentiments, enjoying the reputation of a violent enemy of Perón. But if Berreta should seek to bring into his cabinet Dr. Joaquín Secco Illa, the situation would be entirely different inasmuch as Secco Illa is a man of the loftiest principles and of a moderate nature.

Certain people who are informed about the situation in Uruguay will be amazed at the suggestion that a president chosen from the Colorado faction would ask Christian Democrats to collaborate with him. Indeed José Batlle y Ordóñez, the greatest leader of that party, who died in 1929, was distinguished for his violent anti-clericalism. Twice president, he expelled the Sisters of Charity from hospitals, removed crosses from the cemeteries, and put through as many anti-Catholic laws as he could. In his mad obsession, he went so far as to change the names of traditional feasts; thus Christmas officially became in Uruguay the Day of the Family, and Holy Week was called Tourist Week.

Berreta has declared that he will complete the work of Batlle. But in religious matters he has refrained from expressing any hostility; on the contrary, he has promised to be respectful toward philosophic beliefs. That is the only course open to an intelligent man. The Catholic Church in Uruguay is democratic and the followers of Batlle keep up their anti-clerical sentiments more out of habit than conviction. Berreta himself is far from being a Catholic, but I believe he is equally

distant from being violently anti-religious. The conduct of the priests in Uruguay has heightened respect for them among both friends and adversaries.

Perón has not been indifferent to the results of the Uruguayan elections. His press in the Argentine has supported Herrera in the most enthusiastic terms, and many of the nationalist slogans betray the mark of Perón propagandists. The diatribes against "oligarchy," "Yankee imperialism," "foreign infiltration" and other evils would be quite in order in Argentina. From Buenos Aires there leave for Montevideo hundreds of "tourists" who fill hotels and boarding houses, giving voice to the advantages of the Argentine régime and praising the virtues of the wife of the president of their country. In a number of street skirmishes Perón shock troops have taken an active part disguised, this time, as followers of Herrera; and the good showing made by the nationalists in the elections was celebrated in Argentina (in Perón circles) as a triumph of their own.

Perón knows that Herrera, in spite of the fact that he did not win, controls a large sector in the two chambers, and that it will be very difficult to get along entirely without him. And therefore he has intimated to the Herrera politicians that they hold fast as the principal opposition in order to get the greatest concessions obtainable, at least a definitely conciliatory attitude in Uruguayan relations with Argentina. That is why it is so interesting to learn who will be the future foreign minister. At the moment it cannot be a man labeled as anti-Perón, since Argentina would then declare an economic boycott against Uruguay, producing a serious economic crisis. On the other hand, it cannot be a man who is too enthusiastic for the Perón régime because Berreta's present supporters would abandon him as a result. Perón is on the alert watching developments in order to take immediate action in support of his interests.

But Berreta, who knows all this by heart, is a man able to navigate skilfully in the stormy waters of international politics. A born psychologist, he will assuredly know how to play his cards in such a way as to avoid compromising himself too much either for or against Perón.

Stemming the Tide

GASTON TESSIER

LÉON BLUM has announced that he must soon withdraw from politics. He will be ending his career in beauty, as the French say. When the parties of the Right and Left were unable to govern, they said: we must have time to think things over—meanwhile you can govern or go

through the motions of government so that it will look as if France had a government even if there is no government. Under these unfavorable circumstances Blum had the courage to form a socialist cabinet. Then he had the courage, ability and patriotism to make his government govern as no French cabinet had been able to govern since the Liberation. The following short piece is by the Secretary General of the Catholic trade unionists.—THE EDITORS.

PRICES MUST go down; they must go down 5 percent in January, 1947; in two months they must go down another 5 percent. Simply stated, that is what the Blum government's experiment consists in; and this simple decision may mean salvation for a great country. The decision to fight high prices shows courage and clarity; vigorously and promptly put into execution, it shows a governmental authority, both real and clearly democratic, which has immediately been rewarded by unanimous agreement and confidence on the part of public opinion.

Is there really that deadly race between salaries and prices—the mechanical rabbit pursued by the dogs—of which we are constantly reminded by the professional economists? They are so sure of their knowledge, yet possibly they are too sure of themselves, too easily resigned to the fatalism of their science? That salaries weigh on the cost of production is an incontestable fact; that the cost of repeated labor operations in a great number of products is an important element in cost, it would be childish to deny. Yet many other factors must be taken into consideration; their influence must not be underestimated.

It is possible and in fact a duty, for those who administer the state to react against the apparent determinism of economic forces. The law of supply and demand is no illusion; the scarcity or abundance of merchandise obviously causes prices to rise or to fall; yet this phenomenon is not rigorously absolute; without being forced into strictly collectivist formulas, strong and determined action can modify and even reverse an existing tendency.

Almost everywhere in the world wartime conditions brought price and salary controls; they did not brilliantly succeed everywhere; an almost worldwide state of scarcity necessarily maintained them in existence after the end of hostilities. In France, the Economic Conference of July, 1945, sought to solve the crisis, or at least remedy its worst difficulties, by granting a general increase of 25 percent on salaries in the hope that prices could be stabilized so as to avoid a further increase in the cost of living. These hopes came quickly to an end through cruel and obvious events.

At that time the Christian trade union organizations advocated—instead of a proportional increase in all salaries—a cost of living bonus of 1,500 francs a month, which would have helped the least favored categories of labor. These same organizations found it impossible to accept the Economic Conference's conclusions since, in their opinion, they did not bring any guarantee of a minimum living wage. For the necessity of an absolute social justice certainly remains at the very center of all economic questions of the present time: in exchange for conscientious and continued labor a man must have the certainty of being able to live decently; in any productive enterprise this is an incompressible factor in determining costs. Yet there does not seem great evidence that we are near reaching such a result.

On the night of December 31, the government, before making its decision, made sure that it would have the support of the major organizations of workers, employers and farmers. The *Confédération Générale du Travail* (CGT), which, a few days earlier, had adopted the theory of a minimum living wage, which it evaluated at about 8,650 francs a month, demanded at all events that the minimum wage must not be less than 7,000 francs a month. The French Confederation of Christian Workers (CFTC) had methodically investigated typical workers' budgets, and had submitted the results of its inquiries to Premier Blum on December 20. They showed that to live normally in the greater Paris region in November, 1946, a family had to have a minimum of 9,000 francs a month per person.

But the CFTC remained convinced that what is far more important than any increase in nominal wages is that the wage be real and effective—that is, a wage possessing adequate purchasing power. The CFTC, without abandoning a legitimate request for proper compensation for labor—for all categories of labor—insisted that prices must be brought down. In mid-December the central bureau of the CFTC declared that "no efforts to revive the economic life of the nation can succeed unless the purchasing power of wages is preserved." And *Syndicalism*, the CFTC periodical, in its Christmas issue, wrote: "We must break prices."

And so the professional movement inspired by Christian principles greeted with great satisfaction the first decisions taken by the government to bring prices down. The CFTC's executive commission, meeting on January 3, recognized that these measures were the only serious effort in this direction taken in France by anyone since the Liberation. However, the executive commission requested: the granting to the least favored categories of labor a high cost of living bonus; an increase in family grants; a suppression of the graduated tax on annual wages lower than

100,000 francs. These suggestions, based on precise research, aim at a better and more equitable distribution of raw materials, foodstuffs, manufactured objects; they serve the government's general aim to which they bring useful additions and precisions. In France, on the political plane, it is extremely difficult to achieve national unity, but it can be said that unity is now already assured for the battle against the high cost of living, and this union is made possible and proceeds from the initiative taken by Léon Blum.

Communications

UN'S TOPLESS TOWERS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Probably everyone who has followed the attempts of the UN to find a permanent home is glad to have the business over. The site selection committee had the devil's own time from the start and has had to fight the worst kind of press relations all the way through. One can't help being glad for their own sake, and yet, the manner of it, the almost furtive speed with which Mr. Rockefeller's offer was accepted, the excited hasty cooperation of the city, and finally the choice of Mr. Wallace Harrison as chief planner and the simultaneous rejection of any architectural competition has all of us in the hot stove league both puzzled and annoyed.

Let me repeat that it is not the deed but the manner of the doing that sticks in the throat. The Manhattan site—any site within city limits in fact—comes as a surprise in the light of the Committee's previous emphatic preference for open country in the suburbs. Committee advisor Le Corbusier was even eloquent on the subject. There are, however, obvious advantages, tangible and symbolic in the present site which has already been given Mr. Lewis Mumford's crushing accolade and we can leave further debate safely to later philosophers and planners.

Likewise, no one can object to Mr. Wallace Harrison as chief planner—or architect of the entire project. Mr. Harrison has as fine a record as any living American architect—and he with such others as team with him are certain to produce at the very least a distinguished and appropriate set of buildings. Mr. Harrison's good taste in accepting a paid position, considering his past association with the Rockefeller interests, can perhaps be questioned—but not his fitness for the job.

But—and this is the crux of the question—why did the Committee rush so quickly, almost secretly, upon its final solutions?

The search for a site began over a year ago. The continents of the world were first reviewed and the lot cast for the USA. Then it was decided that only the coastal strips of this country would do, and the Mayor of Chicago dropped out. When the Russians objected to the west coast on the grounds of accessibility, that left the East, and, of the East, the Committee declared it wanted only sites close by large cities—Washington excepted for obvious reasons. New York, Boston and Philadelphia

soon emerged as the only real contenders with governors, mayors and other officials falling over themselves to roll out the carpet. Boston—or some local representative—took a public crack at Russia and that left New York and Philadelphia.

Westchester and Fairfield counties were then combed for likely sites and a half-dozen areas of various size and character were analyzed by the Committee and its experts. The local populations, however, well intoxicated by publicity and a biased press, quickly bared their teeth against the "furriners" and reached down the squirrel guns. The spectacle of the station wagon set sobbing over the sacred American Home, and voting to exclude the un-dainty immigrants from local schools was ludicrous and painful. It seems probable that the UN Committee was strongly influenced in its later action by this attitude of local hostility.

New York City offered Flushing Meadows—or at least 30 acres of it, Lake Success, and sufficient new housing midway between for UN personnel. This offer was refused late in the autumn of '46 and the Committee threw its net in desperation over the whole United States once more.

Suddenly Mr. Rockefeller's dramatic offer was headlined. The Committee and, after it, the Assembly, accepted the offer with equally dramatic speed. Mayor O'Dwyer was quoted in the papers to the effect that housing for UN personnel would be provided by earmarking 600 units in the nearby City low-rent project—Elliott Houses—now going up. If true, this raises some interesting points. Elliott Houses is a city-financed slum clearance and low-rent project intended to house low-income families. Has the Mayor—or has the city indeed—the right to assign these apartments to whom it chooses? The city also gave up its holdings in the area except for the northeast corner of 42 Street and First Avenue, and Park Commissioner Moses gave out a description of his plans for beautifying surrounding approaches and unsnarling traffic.

Less than a week later came the two-pronged announcement by the UN Committee of the appointment of Mr. Harrison as head of Planning and abandonment of any idea of an architectural competition for the UN Buildings. On the very day of the announcement, the New York *Herald Tribune* carried an editorial urging an international architectural competition, thereby backing a program already advanced by the American Institute of Architects and various similar organizations of professional men both here and abroad.

The only reason given by the UN Committee for quashing a competition was that there was no provision in the budget of the UN for temporary quarters beyond 1948 and, therefore, buildings must go up at once. Somehow this isn't very convincing. It is hard to believe that the budget of the UN is quite so inelastic—or that the work or membership of the body will suffer unduly by continued use of temporary quarters. It makes the UN look too much like a bridal couple in a frenzy for their own fireside.

Another item completes the picture. On Wednesday,

January 8, Miss Kilgallen in her Broadway column announced that there are to be two restaurants atop the UN Buildings overlooking the East River and "open to the public natch." Columnists are goosips and not to be taken too seriously, but does this mean that drawings are already made—even before the architectural board of design has been selected?

There are obviously a number of questions to be answered, clearly and honestly, by Mr. Lie and the others concerned. Full explanation must be made of the reasoning behind acceptance of the site and the short circuiting of all proposals for architectural competition. If it was the smug hostility of suburban minds that led the Committee from green pastures to the towers of Manhattan, then why not say so? If Mr. Harrison and his international committee of architects seemed to promise more in terms of efficiency or design or both, why not say so?

Unless these and allied questions concerning the decisions of the Committee are answered, we in the hot stove league all over the world will go on suspecting "deals," "fixes" and other unsavory possibilities.

CHARLES FULLER, *Architect,*
American Institute of Planners.

The Stage & Screen

Temper the Wind

THE MATERIAL of Edward Mabley's and Leonard Mins's play is important. And it is used this way. To the home of the chief manufacturer of a small town in northeastern Bavaria at the present time there arrives an American Lieutenant Colonel in charge of all denazification activities and reconstruction. The household consists of the manufacturer; his aged sister, a character; his daughter; his son-in-law, a still-active nazi; his former American business affiliate. These people are moved thus. The American Colonel having once been an intimate of the family in pre-war days, his good-will is established. Nevertheless his ideology and principles force him to examine the circumstances of the re-opening of the German manufacturer's factory upon which the life of the town depends. In doing this, he runs into a succession of mare's-nests where the vicious and anti-human opportunism of the German businessman is made manifest. The upshot of his discoveries is a riot, engineered through the nazi son-in-law, in which American soldiers and German civilians are killed; the son-in-law is killed; the manufacturer is taken into custody; the abetting American manufacturer is also removed; the Colonel is sure of losing his job; the factory remains closed; and everyone is as miserable and hungry as before. I guess maybe that's the way it is, and maybe it's the way it should be, but it doesn't make a good play. And while most reporters would insist that the esthetic angle in respect of such material is unimportant, I've got a hunch it is only *via* this angle that one can arrive at any philosophical or even political sense the vehicle may contain.

It seems to me of paramount value that the managers as well as the wrighters of the Street should recognize that there is such a thing as a *problem play*. And that this form does not depend upon so-called realism, reportage, or Life, but upon the kind of wily organization which produces ART. (Please rrrroll that R.) A *problem play* considers a problem; its medium; most of all, its audience (see Mr. Shaw). It has got nothing to do with life; very often it can be statistically proved to cheat on life. It is an intellectual exercise with a porpoise, designed to change the existing order of things. Now, it is too simple to charge these authors with the easy faults of naturalism; over-simplification; over-typing: characters who severally represent a single virtue, vice or aptitude: Prussianism, nazism, innocence, Boy Scoutism, or what you will. But what it is dynamic to criticize them for, will be a complete un-understanding of what their problem is and how it should be worked out. Their problem is contained in the attitudes and motivation of the American businessman, and it is of course a moral one. Having been smart enough to deal with this character *not* as a villain, they have still delivered him no dimension at all and have dealt with him from A to exactly A. He is a feebly from way back, who doesn't know about violence, and can estimate nothing but money. Now, it is true—isn't it?—that the most ordinary American Republican capitalist is not a devil; he is simply a man who believes in an untenable good. He has a flag, a charge, a motto, an ideal. If you are a totalitarian, you can sheerly shoot him; but if you are a playwright, you ought to convince him, which is far better than merely proving him wrong. Imagine what would be happening on the house-side of the Playhouse these evenings if this problem were examined, batted back and forth, *played*. The theater is really worth something. (*At the Playhouse.*)

Bloomer Girl

IT IS excellent to announce that John C. Wilson's return-engagement of his hit at the City Center is neat, fresh, wholly nicely done. I call this good producing and can assure everyone, particularly family people, that the tickets are worth it. (*At the City Center.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Nature Is Beautiful—and Cruel

ALTHOUGH I don't agree with M-G-M about 1947 being "the year of *The Yearling*," I still think that this is a good picture. It should please not only the many thousands of readers of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's Pulitzer Prize novel, but also those moviegoers who don't give a hang about whether a film follows a book as long as it employs cinema well. The script, written by Paul Osborn, has caught the spirit and story of Mrs. Rawlings's book extremely well; and Clarence Brown has directed it in true cinematic fashion so that the camera reveals most.

Perhaps it is picayune to find any fault with Sidney Franklin's production, especially since the technicolor and

the Florida scenery (except when we see backdrops through the windows of interior sets) are so exceptionally beautiful; but I must say that I found the film much too long for its single theme and I thought Gregory Peck's performance a trifle too genteel for a backwoods farmer like Penny Baxter. But Claude Jarman, Jr., as the spindly, blond, nice-looking-but-not-pretty, 11-year-old boy, and Jane Wyman, as his unimaginative, hard-working mother, are practically perfect. The relationships among these three people are portrayed with a depth seldom caught by movies. The Baxters have a right to be bitter about the cruel tricks that nature has played on them; and it is not difficult to understand Maw's withdrawal into herself; she cannot forget the three children who died or the crops that were ruined; so, without relenting, she looks with envy on the warm comradeship and love that exist between Jody and his father.

It is ironical that such a beautiful locale (Florida's Lake George district in 1878) could also cause so much pain. The lessons that Jody learns are taught by both man and nature and make up the main story of this fascinating film. Animals are his teachers: the vicious bear, the rattlesnake, and most of all Flag, the wild deer who becomes his adored pet but who proves as destructive as the Baxter enemies because he never learns to stay out of the cultivated fields. People also teach Jody a great deal: the brawling neighbors with their strange mixture of meanness and sentimentality, and his own parents whose spirit has not been broken by privation and sorrow. Even the elements instruct Jody, for this film is full of a boy's wonder at spring, the cruelty of destructive storms and animals, and fears induced by the treacherous swamp. But this picture is also full of human warmth. Jody runs away after his mother shoots Flag, but hunger and love drive him back. And when his father makes him understand that every man "wants to spare his young 'un the pain he went through," Jody has learned another lesson. "He ain't a yearling no longer."

Another film tries to fill us with the spirit of the great outdoors, but gets bogged down by its own story. This is really too bad, for "*California*" has some fine technicolor and stunning scenery to sing the praises of the state it celebrates. (And it will make the Californians furious to come out second best in comparison with the movie that does so well by Florida.) But this film had several strikes against it in the first place. It is one of those epic affairs with a story full of clichés about a trek across country to the golden state where the settlers run into more clichés and a plot that has already worn itself out. The cast, directed by John Farrow, does its best but it has difficulty breathing life into characterizations that have been repeated ever since the first movie epics thrilled our parents. On the wagon train are Ray Milland as the brave leader who has a mysterious background, Barbara Stanwyck as a woman of bad reputation, Barry Fitzgerald as a kindly old farmer who hopes to plant his grape cuttings in the land of opportunity, and many others who are hurrying to California for gold or good crops. They arrive in time to get into a big row over whether California should become a state with law and order, or

an empire which blackguards played by George Coulouris, Albert Dekker, Gavin Muir and others intend to dominate. If you know your history at all you know which side wins; and if you know your movies you'll know that Ray and Barbara, who have been at cross purposes most of the time, will come together in a clinch at the finale. They do, shortly after Barry Fitzgerald, clutching his growing grape vines, has been killed by the villains. If you're fond of California and you like good scenery with interesting background music, you may enjoy this film. If you expect more of a movie, don't tell "California" that here you come.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

When the Going Was Good. Evelyn Waugh. Little Brown. \$3.00.

THE PRESENT volume comprises Mr. Waugh's selections from four travel books, "Bachelor Abroad," "They Were Still Dancing," "Ninety-Two Days" and "Waugh in Abyssinia," all of which were published between the years 1929 and 1935. In his preface the author is more than slightly self-disparaging. The books, he writes, were originally pot-boilers, "pedestrian day-to-day accounts of things seen and people met, interspersed with commonplace information and some rather callow comments." He appears to regard these accounts as lightly amusing forerunners of his better fiction, exercises in description, profiling and exquisitely stylized language. "I was simply a young man, typical of my age; we travelled as a matter of course. I rejoice that I went when the going was good."

Greatest interest in the book attaches to the insight it affords of the author of "A Handful of Dust" and "Brideshead Revisited." Those who regard the latter book as a private revelation will attain to a juster estimate of Waugh's abilities and limitations by a careful reading of "When the Going Was Good." Here, in an atmosphere without serious overtones, his cleverness and his wit, his occasional wryness and snobbery, the absence of pity or warm sentiment of any kind, disclose a silvery vein of genuine satire. There is moreover an inescapable aura of sophisticated boyishness about Waugh, that reminds one at times of Max Beerbohm of "Zuleika Dobson" and at other times of Compton Mackenzie of "Sinister Street." Although by no means an imitative writer he is, as he observed in the quotations above, a young man typical of his age, without being the typical young man of the age. How typical he is, in spite of his singular talent, may readily be determined when one recalls the attitudes he shares not only with Beerbohm and Mackenzie, but also with Aldous Huxley, Graham Greene and Peter Fleming. Waugh is very British and very Oxonian and, to some Americans, very top-hat. His manners, like his style, are conscious and deliberate. Hence, when the Luce bureau of literature called him a devout Catholic, a devout aristocrat and a devout snob, they were merely noting Waugh's own caricature of himself. Such a distortion is evident in "When the Going Was Good," as it is not evident in "Brideshead Revisited."

"Brideshead Revisited" is a brilliant entertaining book. In addition to the keenness of its observations it contains a quite extraordinary degree of insight into char-

acter and some notable intimations on the mystery of grace. These incomparable literary treasures do not satisfy the extreme partisans. A zealous clique pressing for Waugh's immediate classicization discovers in his fable not only observation, insight and intuition, but also a perfect realization of the drama of conscience. For them Waugh disguises the tragic range of Dostoevsky under the appearance of reticent high comedy. An opposite reactionary group, also regarding the book as a professedly spiritual commentary rather than an exercise of the creative imagination illumined by faith, finds it eccentric in characterization and inexact if not misleading in its theology. Both groups, it seems, have clouded the issue by inventing a Waugh who doesn't exist. Their Waugh is not a young man typical of his age, with clearly revealed professional attitudes and habits, but a curiously English version of Mauriac, Bernanos and Bloy. Unquestionably the Waugh of "Brideshead Revisited" is more profound, more subtle and more mystical than the Waugh of "When the Going Was Good." But the child was father to the man, and it is impossible to grasp the real wisdom of the master without reading (and enjoying) the casual wit of the apprentice.

FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY.

Time of Delirium. Hermann Rauschnig. Appleton. \$4.00.

THERE ARE books which must be regarded as failures, but which are at the same time important as symptoms of widely held attitudes. They are more respectable than books which are much clearer, more consistent, and not as much torn by passions and prejudices. Such a work is H. Rauschnig's "Time of Delirium."

This analysis of the crisis of our time and this speculation about the prospects of the postwar era is not as important as Rauschnig's "Revolution of Nihilism," that impressive confession of a nationalistic-conservative German who was honest enough to admit publicly his deception by Hitler's movement. Only late did Rauschnig realize its nihilistic character, its utilization of all ideas and mass urges for limitless increase of the power monopolized by a group of amoral men and fanatical cynics. "The Revolution of Nihilism" prevented many outside of Germany from repeating the errors of Rauschnig himself, who had joined the nazis and had become after 1933 the pro-nazi president of the Senate of Danzig. The other books of Rauschnig, which he published as a refugee during Hitler's régime, are illustrations of the fundamental thesis of the "Revolution of Nihilism." Most valuable was "The Voice of Destruction" which gave an unforgettable characteristic of the methods and projects of the *Fuehrer*.

The new book of Rauschnig, his first since 1942, suffers from the absence of a dominating central approach. It is an attempt to show that the present crisis is not only an external political crisis, but the culmination of a development rooted in modern secularization, in the rise of the modern mass-society, in the discrepancy between technological progress and ethical-social order. Many excellent remarks and wise statements are made by the author, who is a very cultured reader of authors such as Burckhardt and Donoso Cortes and who knows how to utilize such contemporary students as Plessner and Bauhofer (much too little known in the USA). This general approach is combined with a special interest in modern revolutionary tactics: we find here many valu-

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able observations for which Rauschnig is indebted to his study of Lenin. And finally Rauschnig is very much concerned with present-day foreign politics, particularly with the fate of Germany. He is inclined to ascribe to the USA and England a too anti-German policy, a drive for a harsh peace; he is afraid that Germany will be driven into the arms of Russia. But fortunately, not the elections in Berlin alone have been proving that Russian attempts to accomplish control of Germans have completely failed.

Rauschnig's book may be very helpful for those who believe that present difficulties can be overcome by manipulating some gadgets, organizing conferences, and inventing new techniques. It may help teach them that to be immersed in the present is not enough. On the other hand, Rauschnig can easily be accused of some confusion. Sometimes the crisis which is described as a spiritual one appears as the expression of a struggle among powers. Rauschnig is surely right in pointing out that nazism has a universal background, but he does not analyze deeply enough its peculiar German features. German philosophers and historians as Jaspers and Meinecke, who lived through the whole of Hitler's régime in Germany, have brought out much clearer the distribution of universal and German features in nazism. (Karl Jaspers: *Die Schuldfrage*, and F. Meinecke: *Die Deutsche Katastrophe*.) If Rauschnig tries to go beyond the analysis of present uncertain conditions where most various developments are possible, he oscillates between an over-pessimism, over-estimating Russia's power and the strength of Soviet political pseudo-religion, and a belief that everything will be settled somehow by a purely moral upsurge. A confused book, despite many brilliant pages (How impressive, for instance, is the characterization of Switzerland!) and despite the best intentions. Rauschnig is emotionally too upset (which only honors him) by the end of the war, by the atomic bomb, by the apparent helplessness of the opponents of Russia. He is almost hypnotized by the forces trying to shape the world today into an empire without moral unity, kept together exclusively by ruthlessness and manipulation, by utilization of the urge for external unification and satisfaction of material needs. Rauschnig will give much more than impressions and analysis: but he does not succeed in presenting a vision. The "conservative revolution" which he advocates does not come to life; it remains a synthetic formula, developed, it is true by a highly cultured observer of the chaos of the twentieth century. Rauschnig suffers under the fact that, unlike Horace, the time of delirium is his own present and not a past toward which he can look back, thankful that it has been overcome by "his own age of the great Peace."

WALDEMAR GURIAN.

Cruising to Florida. Morley Cooper. Whittlesey. \$3.00.

IT IS unusual for a book of this type to be reviewed in the pages of *THE COMMONWEAL*. In a country still shaken by the coal strike, in a world living within the shadow of the atom bomb, in a world economy that has broken down, Mr. Cooper introduces the reader to another world, the world of the cruising yachtsman whose key problems consist primarily of the difficulty in procuring ice along the intracoastal waterway, discourtesy from dock attendants, and an occasional grounding in the shallow waters of the waterway.

I do not wish to give the impression that this is another escapist book. It is not an adventure story; it is no exciting tale of a voyage around the world in a small boat in the manner of Slocum, Robinson, Jack London and company. Mr. Cooper is a qualified expert on cruising and his articles and books are well known to all of us interested in sailing and boating. He has written a sober personal account of a trip to Florida via the intra-coastal waterway from Philadelphia to Fort Myers, a trip made with his wife in a medium-sized cruiser. His book is designed not to amuse but to instruct others planning a similar trip. He makes plain the difficulties to be encountered and gives excellent advice on the preparations to make, the best methods of coping with the dangerous bodies of open water on the way, the best ports for over-night stops, and the best routine for daily cruising. I can recommend his book heartily for anyone planning to cruise to Florida.

Although his book is meant to be practical rather than amusing, I read it as I would an adventure novel for I made the trip in reverse and without the benefit of any such guide as his. In general his findings checked with my own and I agree that the Florida jaunt is not a picnic by any means. One friend advised me not to waste any money on charts: I simply had to get into a ditch and stay there. I dread to think what would have happened if I had followed this advice. One key recommendation Mr. Cooper makes is to end each day's run in the afternoon, thus insuring daylight navigation and time to replenish one's stores before everything is closed. He says that the hazards of the route are such that travelling at night is almost impossible. Unfortunately, we could not follow this advice even though we agreed to its wisdom. His boat cruised at nine miles an hour; my fourteen-ton sloop being an auxiliary cruised at only five miles an hour. This meant that every night we were still miles from any possible anchorage and had to struggle on in the dark sometimes for hours and then fail to make any port. We too got lost crossing Albermarle Sound while fighting heavy waves but we were doing it after dark; Mr. Cooper got lost in broad daylight.

Mr. Cooper spent some twenty-nine days in getting to Florida. It took us twenty-eight days to make the somewhat shorter trip from Fort Pierce to Washington, D. C. But nine of these days were spent in port making engine repairs. Mr. Cooper could depend on an excellent engine. Ours was an obsolete model almost ready for the graveyard. Consequently we missed some of the quiet and peace he associates with cruising. On the other hand we did have sails so that once we hit Chesapeake Bay and fairly open water we were reasonably sure we would eventually reach our destination.

There is a great deal to be said for cruising, whether by sail or by motor. Naturally I prefer sail, the quiet motion, the lack of noise and smell and the satisfaction of making the wind push you in almost any direction you wish to go. Your boat is your home. Unlike camping there are few preparations to be made at the end of the day. There is a never-ending thrill at dropping anchor in some new cove at night, perhaps a swim overboard, and then the complete peace of a night far from city noises.

On the Eastern Seaboard alone there are some quarter-million boat owners. Most of these people are so wrapped up in their boating hobby that they give little

attention to the fateful developments of our times. Mr. Cooper is in that enviable position in which he makes his living sailing and cruising and then writing about it for those who must spend eight hours a day in an office. Socially and politically, most yachtsmen are conservative. Their hobby can be called a kind of escapism for it undoubtedly distracts their attention from the significant trends of the times. Yet ideally such a sport should broaden one's personality, inculcate the virtues of courage, providence, foresight and mutual aid. Perhaps one trouble is that yachting is already too much of a commercialized sport, yacht clubs are too fancy, the boatmen do too little of their own work, there is still too much emphasis on varnish and polish. And comparatively few yachtsmen ever make any really extended cruises during which they are forced to rely upon their own ingenuity.

For most people boating is a luxury and often an expensive one. For us decentralists it can be both a source of real pleasure and a means to an end. In my own case my floating home by saving me from paying rent has enabled me to build a small home of my own on the farm I recently acquired. My tiny children (the oldest being only two and three) have become as agile as monkeys climbing about the sloop and next summer when I sail my vessel to my farm on Chesapeake Bay the snug cabin on board will make an excellent guest home for visitors. Or I can sail across the bay to visit my friends on Indian Point or Eastern Bay.

WALTER J. MARX.

Chinese Ghost and Love Stories. P'u Sung-Ling. Translated by Rose Quong. Pantheon. \$3.75.

NO LOVELIER story-book for grown-ups than this selection from the Liao Chad stories can be imagined. Its sealing-wax red dust-cover, its lovely clear yellow binding with a design of bamboos on it, the forty-five illustrative drawings and designs are all ancillary to the stories, which are smooth as iced satin, clear as air after rain. And all are about such enchanting characters: foxes and spirits, and their curious love affairs with mortals. Such tales have thrilled men ever since, in Genesis, "the sons of God seeing the daughters of men that they were fair." But these ghostly Chinese lovers and their ladies have none of the gruesomeness of the demon lovers of the West, nor of the women who wait for them. They are intensely human, lovingly, friendly: cousins not of Faust's Helen but of Hans Andersen's Little Mermaid, of Matthew Arnold's Forsaken Merman or Goethe's *Neue Melusine*.

And, of course, because they are Chinese, there is a continual current of sage wisdom watering even the most innocent, unpretentious story. For example, what could be truer than: "Whoever is crazy on writing may become a successful writer, whoever is crazy on art may become a successful artist. Only the unsuccessful are not crazy at all." And Heng-Niang's fox's advice to Chu, the sulky wife whose husband had taken a concubine, is everlastingly valuable: "Let your husband be completely free; but when he comes to you, however, do not receive him." Furthermore, Chu must appear first ugly, then beautiful in the extreme, "because, when beauty is withdrawn from a man's sight, and after he suddenly looks on it again, it is to him like a new meeting."

These girls, lovely as bamboo, who appear to scholars, who live with them and love them, and then sweetly, sadly, disappear or simply disintegrate are the most agree-

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By Denis Gwynn

Lord Shrewsbury, as premier Earl of England, made Alton Towers the brilliant centre of Catholic social and religious life, while Newman and his friends still believed that English Catholics were only to be "found in corners and alleys and cellars and the housetops, or in the recesses of the country." His generosity in building and adorning the new churches which were then arising throughout England has become a legend, but no clear record of the part he played has hitherto been attempted.

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able ghosts in literature, and Mart Buber's sympathetic introduction sets them in their perspective in Chinese history and literature. Rose Quong's "Chinese Wit, Wisdom and Chinese Characters" was the most perfect small book published last year: now the Pantheon Press and Miss Quong have done it again, and incomparably well. No nicer story-book can be found in any country, at any price, nor any half so beautifully produced. Wang Chih-Chen's advice will gladly be taken by all Miss Quong's readers:

Let's talk nonsense and listen as we please
 . . . fain would we hear, in the hush of a tomb,
 spirits singing their songs.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

The Roots of Our Learning. Francis Neilson. New York: the Robert Shalkenbach Foundation. \$3.00.

THIS is a most interesting book of eleven essays, "an introduction to the achievements of the past in philosophy, science and art," written by what must be a very remarkable man. Its author, Francis Neilson, is now in his eightieth year. A largely self-educated man he has been an actor, stage manager for Charles Frohman and impressario at the Royal Opera where he produced the works of Mozart and Wagner as he imagined their composers intended them to be. He was also (though this is, probably, less important) a British MP for five years. He has been called the last living Victorian radical, of the school of Cobden and Bright, but there is little trace of this preoccupation in these essays. On the contrary, in Mr. Neilson's affection for the Catholic heritage of the past, his enthusiasm for such special antiquities as Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Myth, he reminds one a little of Arthur Machen (who was also, for a time, a strolling player) though completely without the latter's cute, conscious and petulant medievalism. Neilson appears to be a far more penetrating and attractive "humanist" than most of the collegiate gentlemen who solemnly compose similar volumes (based on lecture notes) under the banners blessed by the late Irving Babbitt.

The fundamental point of view pervading these essays may be discerned from a brief sentence in the second: "The [true] scientist of our day rejects no myth." A little later in the same paper on "The Heritage of the Bible," Mr. Neilson expands this idea a little in the words of no less a personage than Albert Einstein: "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger is as good as dead; his eyes are closed." Hence our author treats the legend of Arthur with as much respect as the biblical story of the Flood (long since proved by such scientists as Arthur Weigell and Leonard Wooley) and quotes from the American orientalist Albright: "Thanks to the new control of tradition which archaeology affords, the substantial historicity of the Arthurian cycle is becoming more and more evident."

Mr. Neilson reveals his musical background by an all too brief essay on one of the most vital and beautiful composers who ever lived, the Englishman, William Byrd (1543-1623) that is a contemporary of Shakespeare, and the Catholic choirmaster of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel Royal. His variations on the Gregorian Mass No. IV are among the loveliest pieces of polyphony known to this reviewer, and have been recorded by the National Cath-

olic Sound Specialists, New York City. Like the author of "Hamlet," Byrd, in Mr. Neilson's words, "sang to warring Catholics and Protestants" in an idiom which bid fair to dissolve their sectarian tumults in the divine sea of a genius today so neglected even by musicians.

In concluding this very inadequate notice of a highly inspiring book, we are reminded of reading recently Norman Douglas's latest volume, "A Late Harvest" which, perhaps, will never be published in this country. Together with Samuel Butler and H. L. Mencken, he is one of the most delightful writers (of non-fiction) known to us; but all three, in their different ways, have paraded their genial atheism and a kind of bluff contempt for all the values of the Christian past in complete contrast to the spirit of Mr. Neilson's book. We can thoroughly admire and enjoy such people without taking their opinions on the gods one whit more seriously than those of the tone-deaf Darwin on the subject of the "Missa Solemnis."

CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

Journeys in Time. Edited by Blair Niles. Coward-McCann. \$4.00.

THOUGH the editor has chosen to reject the now abused term "anthology" in favor of "symposium," while her publishers plump for the almost as much abused "treasury," this book is an anthology of creative non-fictional writing about Latin America by non-Latin-American authors from 1519 to 1942. It is not an anthology of the best, but of what the editor likes the best; fiction was ruled out, and economics, the natural sciences, archaeology, and anthropology have been excluded; while for the Latin American writers the reader is referred to German Arciniegas's "The Green Continent." "Journeys in Time" is a highly personal anthology whose pattern is based upon Mrs. Niles's concept of four centuries of Latin American development, and whose selections are arranged chronologically by topic rather than by date of composition. The chief selective principle was that each piece "must be, above all, alive, and convey truly the emotion of its day and its place." Mrs. Niles believes with Havelock Ellis that the hardest facts are the facts of feeling. So she has gathered a "sheaf of feelings" on the basis of her twenty years of reading, writing, and traveling about Latin America. These she has linked together with some 50,000 words of introduction, comment, interpretation, and biographical material, in addition to two selections from her own books, thus fulfilling the rôle of active hostess at her symposium.

The guests include Bernal Diaz, Thomas Gage, Alexander Selkirk, Charles Waterton, Madame Calderon de Barca, Countess Kollonitz, W. H. Hudson, R. B. Cunninghame Graham, Rudyard Kipling, Cecil Rodgers, Charles Flandrau, H. M. Tomlinson, Joseph Hergesheimer, William McFee, Christopher Morley, Waldo Frank, Stella Burke May, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, A. F. Tschiffely, Hudson Strode, Paul Morand, Archibald Macleish, and Stefan Zweig. Mrs. Niles' taste is catholic, as this list of her favorite writers on her favorite topic indicates, and her enthusiasm for Latin America is such that anyone who appreciates that land, on whatever level, is thought worthy of inclusion in her company. But despite this lack of discrimination, she has performed a great service to the new North American interest in the southern half of this hemisphere by col-

lecting so much of the best that has been written about it. The very variety of the selections mirrors that of the land which we are beginning to realize is not one but many. Though Mrs. Niles' romantic enthusiasm is stronger than her critical sense, and her book would be the better for some omissions of both selections and editorial matter, it is the most absorbing and revealing single volume on the intangibles of Latin America which has come this reviewer's way. It is also an excellent introduction to some neglected classics of English travel literature.

MASON WADE.

The Wanderer. Alain-Fournier. *New Directions.* \$1.50.

KILLED IN ACTION during the early months of World War I while still in his twenties, Henri Alain-Fournier left behind a single brief novel, "Le Grand Meaulnes." Despite the admiration of a few discerning critics like Péguy, Madame Rachilde and Julien Benda, the unpretentious work was virtually ignored until the war was well over. Gradually, its moving evocation of the romantic restlessness, idealism and tragic mistakes of adolescence, its skilful blend of the tangible details of French provincial life and the French countryside with the intangible "nostalgia of the soul," the concise simplicity of its structure and language found an expanding national audience which has required some eighty reprints. To correct its continuing obscurity in this country, *New Directions* has reissued in its attractive *New Classics Series* the 1928 English translation by Françoise Delisle, with Havelock Ellis's introduction. The translation is not entirely satisfactory; at times too literal a rendering results in stilted ("She is dead, is that not so?") or ungrammatical passages ("It is only we, it is only me, who am guilty"); at other times, the translator has chosen to invent effects of assonance and alliteration which the author's straightforward prose avoids; and the use of British slang terms such as "ripping," "lark" and "rag" is disconcerting. The introduction, however, is unusually informative; Mr. Ellis has drawn upon Fournier's extensive correspondence with his lifelong friend Jacques Rivière to trace in detail Fournier's biography, influences, admirations and literary credo.

DAVID BURNHAM.

The Peace of the Augustans. George Saintsbury. *Oxford.* \$1.10.

THIS WORK, first published in 1915, is now reissued in the "World's Classics" series. One of its interesting features is the introductory essay by Saintsbury's successor to the chair of English literature at the University of Edinburgh, Sir Herbert Grierson, who does *not* share the author's views on poetry or on the eighteenth century.

Sainbury's aim in writing this book was to combat the "extreme denigration" of the eighteenth century, first begun by the Romantics, and still in vogue. In his own words:

It is this abstinence—this "taking-for-granted"—of the literature of the eighteenth century as a thing estimable perhaps, but negligible and certainly not very delectable, which has existed too long, still exists, and ought to be abolished.

His line of defense is that every century has its own peculiar tastes and aims, which it is unfair to judge by those of another period. The house of literature, he points out, has many mansions, every one of which we should

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explore and appreciate. What, then, is to be found in the mansion of the Augustans? He concedes that there is not to be found to any great extent that quality described as "the sublime," but there is something equally valuable—peace, or more specifically, "rest and refreshment." The book's objective is to discover and expose for the reader those qualities of rest and refreshment embodied in the literature of the Augustan age. You may object to his use of the word "Augustan" to cover the whole of the eighteenth century, rather than only the period of Pope, Addison and Swift; Saintsbury has anticipated this objection by showing that the men of the latter half of the century, the pre-Romantics, his "fugitives from the happy valley," never quite lost the qualities of peace and refreshment that belong to the Augustans.

Inevitable, of course, in the discussion of the literature of this period is the question: What is good poetry? Looking at it as a man who has grown old in the service of literature, Saintsbury takes the common-sense attitude that there are different types of poetry, all of which are good. He disagrees with those who give an exclusive place to "matter" without considering perfection of form as a praiseworthy accomplishment. He finds the chief glory of Pope, for instance, in his diction and phraseology, in his masterly handling of the couplet.

The best sections of the book are those on the novel and Dr. Johnson. His remarks on the novel should not be missed; lovers of Johnson will be pleased with his analysis of that great man's character: "common sense salted and spirited with humor; inflexible principle combined with utmost charity; wide knowledge without pedantry. . . ."

This work has certain drawbacks which stem from its two-fold aim, for it is a history of the literature of the eighteenth century as well as a determined search for those qualities which he considers its outstanding virtues. Moreover, there is an occasional straining of evidence in an attempt to find good in every writer; one feels that there is too much tolerance of mediocrity.

During the thirty-odd years which have passed since this work was first published much has been done to turn back the tide of "denigration" and re-establish the reputation of the Augustans. No matter how the tide of criticism flows, this work will stand out as one of the most sensible things written about that century. Even if you do not agree with all Saintsbury says, you will not fail to get a good deal of "rest and refreshment" from his own chatty style and mature wisdom. A. P. CAMPBELL.

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